Saml May Jr
Dec 13. 1851

21 Cornhill Boston, Dec. 3. 1851.

My dear Sir,

I thank you for yours of the 28th, which came to hand, on Monday I believe. I had received, a day or two previously, a letter from Abby Foster, acknowledging the receipt of the money sent.

Our Exec. Comtee (Am. A.S. Society) had a meeting on Monday morning last. Mr. Garrison laid before them your suggestions about our Agents now in New York, and the movements of your Syracuse Com'tee for the raising of Funds for the trials. A difference of opinion was expressed as to the propriety of the Society's Agents taking up any local & specific work, either in immediate Connexion with their Agency, or otherwise. But the Comtee. unanimously Voted, That the Agents, now in New York, be at liberty to accept of the proposition of the Syracuse Committee, if they think proper to do so for a reasonable time & but with the understanding that, during such time, they cease to be the Agents of the Am. A.S. Society; - and, further, that if they decide not to accept of said proposition, that they should, as soon as may be, withdraw from those portions of the State, in which your Committee desire to act for the Collection of Funds. —

Of course we feel a deep sympathy in the efforts you are making, to meet & resist the tyranny of the Government; and a deep interest in the success of those efforts; and if we cannot, as a Society, directly aid a movement of this sort, we feel that we ought not, even in appearance, to put any obstruction in the way, or do aught to diminish your resources.

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To me it seems that it is not good policy for the American a.s. society to aid directly any of these movements. ~~As they are local in their nature, so~~ ~~I think~~ They are local in their character; and should, I think, be sustained & carried on, in & by the community where the outrage is committed. The indignation against these outrages will then both appear and be the expression of those who may be expected to feel, and are entitled to feel, especially aggrieved. It will ~~both~~ have power and importance, all over the land, because it is such; because it is the spontaneous & indignant voice of the insulted community. But if the affair is taken up by those in distant places — especially if an organized Antislavery Society, or prominent members of it, laying aside their usual work, take up & engage zealously in it — ~~a local affair of this kind~~ then the entire movement will appear far too narrow, as to numbers, limited to an Association instead of the general voice, the matter of course work of a Society instead of the self-prompted act of all true hearts. Moreover, if the Society sends out its men in one case, it will be expected to do it in the other cases; and the ultimate effect will be that, in the expectation that a supposed-powerful Antislavery Organization will carry on the work, individuals in the

particular localities will neglect it. — So that, beyond the private contributions of individuals, and the expression of sympathy & feeling of opinion in the public journals, it seems to me that good policy & good judgment dictate that your movements should be strictly your own, — in order to its greatest effect, and surest success. — This, of course, does not preclude private contributions, to any extent that may be deemed necessary. — My own hope is, therefore, that our old, & well-known Agents will not engage in this particular work of raising money for the trials, in the Syracuse case - (or any other.); but that they will withdraw from the field, for the present, and until you have had an opportunity to make your desired & needful appeal for funds. If they should withdraw, I hope your Committee will proceed at once with their business, so as to enable our Agents to do their work, which we believe a vitally-important one, in your great and influential State.

I read your Speech of Oct. 14th — first an abstract of it, afterwards the entire speech - at the time, & repeatedly said that I thought it an admirable speech, & one of your most effective & successful efforts. I have read the most of your correspondence in the "Star", & with much pleasure. One or two not. came, when I was exceedingly occupied in the removal of my

family, and the settling up of my concerns at Leicester, and the articles were not read. It isn't always that a pro-slavery writer knows himself so well as, judging from the name he assumes, your Correspondent does. — I have never heard of Dr. Dewey's saying aught about your Speech. Poor, wretched, lost man! He has sold his Soul to the Devil, I verily believe, — He is giving his course of Lectures, on Human Nature, at N. Bedford, & preaching meanwhile in the Unitarian Church, & is receiving at the rate of $100. a lecture, — so I am told. He will need subsidies equal to ~~Dr.~~ Daniel Webster soon — I mean, in proportion.

As for the "parchments" I sent you, I hope you will be able, by extemporaneous additions, to hide some of their defects, — and give them a new impress — & then make them impress

My father has completed three quarters of a Century to-day he is 75 years old.* He is not in very good spirits, and has a good deal to depress him; — though his bodily health is pretty good. Fredric is 30, to-day. We are all in pretty good health. — I was at Mrs. Alcotts' last evening. All well there.

With much love to Cousins Lucretia & Charlotte, to Miss Coffin, and all the rest — I am, Affectionately Yours

Sam'l. May Jr.

* The last half of this letter written on Dec. 4.

Ms. A.6.1.4)